SANGHA 會員通訊  Issue 2, Dec 2019

聖誕及新年快樂！Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

At this time of year, sharing, goodwill, peace, joy and generosity are emphasised. New beginnings are around the corner in 2020.

Welcome to Issue 2 of 【SANGHA 會員通訊】！

In this issue, we focus on the role of the Iyengar Yoga teacher, highlighting responsibilities carefully designed and developed by Guruji.

We are also happy to share reflections from some higher-level candidates on last September’s assessment.

We have new sections for Members & Teachers in 【SANGHA 會員通訊】 now… get in touch, and tell us your news! Read on!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **March 9 - 14, 2020** - IYAHK - Abhijata Iyengar in Jakarta, by BKSI Yoga Indonesia (IYAHK takes registration and IYAHK members enjoy the extended Early-Bird Rate at US$475 (excluding props) until 10 December, 2019; register here: https://form.jotform.me/91828503701455?fbclid=IwAR0bMjfbimfshBiNAzLYO2ICZTedM Nwx0rQaQ8u_fEVzPXPPVU3SaKXRpTU and put “Pay via IYAHK”) under Medical Condition (if any) by 10 December 2019.)

IYAHK will collect payment (including additional fees for props and video) by 20 December 2019. 此項活動由印尼協會主辦，中國協會有普通話翻譯。香港協會暫不提供廣東話翻譯。

- **March 20 - 22, 2020** - Yoga Central Iyengar Central - Carrie Owerko at Congregation House in Causeway Bay

- **April 23 - 26, 2020** - IYAHK - Iyengar Yoga Convention in Hong Kong by Father Joseph H. Pereira at HKICC Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity Arts and Culture Centre in Lok Fu. Registration opens on January 2, 2020 - details attached. 2020年1月2日開始報名；附上中文資料。
EXCERPTS FROM PUNE CONSTITUTION
Responsibilities of Iyengar Teachers

Congratulations to the eight candidates who recently cleared their respective hurdles of rigorous assessments in September!

Yoga is a life-transforming as well as a life-long pursuit. And teaching yoga in general, and in the Iyengar tradition in particular, comes with huge obligations and responsibilities.

Central to these enormous obligations and responsibilities is the ethical foundation embodied in the precepts of Yama and Niyama, the first two of the eight limbs of Astanga Yoga, a systematic and progressive approach to the yogic path. (The other limbs are asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi.)

Yama and niyama are great ethical vows forming the ethical discipline that characterizes dedicated, devoted and reverential teaching.

Yama highlights 5 ethical obligations to society: ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truth), asteya (non-stealing), brahmacharya (self-control) and aparigraha (non-greed).

Niyama refers to self-ethical observances: saucha (cleanliness), santosa (contentment), tapas (sustained practice), svadhyaya (self-study) and Isvara Pranidhana (humble surrender to God).

How do these principles relate to Iyengar teachers in the context of teaching and their professional conduct? Here are some broad principles set out by the IYAHK, based on the Pune Constitution:

- **Ahimsa**: Iyengar teachers are to refrain from criticizing other teachers behind their back and other systems of Yoga.

- **Satya**: Iyengar teachers have to accurately represent their training, education and experience relevant to the teaching of Iyengar Yoga.

- **Aparigraha**: In a classroom context, Iyengar teachers are not to mix their teachings of Iyengar Yoga with other disciplines. The temptation to mix is great when teachers try to attract students to their classes.

- **Tapas**: Iyengar teachers are to dedicate themselves to studying, teaching and promoting the art, science and philosophy of yoga based on those of BKS Iyengar.
● **Svadhyaya**: Iyengar teachers are to keep up with, and continue, their studies and methods put forth by BKS Iyengar and his family or indirectly through activities organized by the IYAHK and other teachers certified at higher levels. Yoga, after all, is a life-long pursuit and does not stop after we get our certificates.

For the yoga **sangha** (community) to thrive in Hong Kong, Iyengar teachers can help promote the yoga spirit by:

- embracing truthfulness in all dealings with their students and with the community (**satya**).
- avoiding all forms of sexual harassment of students and are honest in their intimate relationships (**ahimsa and brahmacharya**).
- refraining from discriminating on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, financial status, national identity and physical disability (**asteya**).
- acknowledging and recognizing the power differential between teachers and students and refraining from abusing their trust and exploiting the sacred relationship (**ahimsa and aparigraha**).
- generously helping students, when possible, to find another teacher when the basic teacher-student relationship is compromised (**aparigraha**).
- teach with earnestness and sincerity (**tapas**).

When it comes to the precept of **sauca** (cleanliness), Iyengar teachers are encouraged to:

- maintain a clean and well-groomed appearance
- dress modestly in an Iyengar setting (**sauca and brahmacharya**)
- avoid substance abuse, such as drugs and alcohol

When **sauca** (cleanliness) becomes a part of our daily lives, our body is cleansed, turning it into a temple from which to purify our minds and control the senses.

The ethical vows highlighted above, when observed voluntarily with sincerity and reverence, will place us on a firm footing in our yogic pursuit. [Edited and Coordinated by Foo Choy Peng]
ABOUT THE HONG KONG ASSESSMENT IN 2019

Sharing from the Candidates

Kitty Wong (JI3)

I passed the Junior Intermediate III assessment on 3 Sep 2019 in Hong Kong.

In the past, my assessments were either not held by IYAHK, or held outside Hong Kong. It's my fourth assessment and also my fourth certificate. Finally we have our own association and we can hold our own assessment here! I was so fortunate that this assessment could take place – insufficient candidates for this level; HK situation getting worse; some assessors were concerned about the safety. I was worried about the assessment was not going to happen which I had been waiting for long time.

Big thanks to IYAHK's help, such as 'escorting' the assessors from the airport or guided them to take taxi; daily updates regarding the traffic status for the assessors. Then finally all assessors safely arrived here. Also big thanks to Icy who is the venue owner for the assessment to allow us to go there to practise before the assessment, so we could be more familiar with the props and environment. Of course, also thanks for the valuable feedbacks from the assessors. These are the motivation for me to go further.

Lastly, I am very blessed that I have a such good trainer, teacher and friend George who has been guiding me a lot. I don't think I could go that far without him.

Namaste!
Kitty
It was a backdrop of instability in Hong Kong at the time of our exam, with last minute changes of the place we would hold our exam. This is real life, ups and downs thrown at us, asking us to make the most of sutra 1.2 Yoga Citta Vritti nirodha, to succeed in this exam. Yoga is the cessation of movements in the consciousness, which had to come through in our own practice and in our teaching. This sutra will encourage steadiness and strength as in sutra II.46 Sthira sukham asanam. Asana is perfect firmness of body, steadiness of intelligence and benevolence of spirit which is more of an effortless yoga than a physical yoga.

The work at this level is done on your own. We had all come from different studios, the four of us. We started with our self-practice in the morning that was timed which we had already spent most of the summer mastering on our own. I had to alter my practice somewhat as my knee had become painful in my padmasanas. It all went well and the assessors were understanding and watching to see how I dealt with this situation. Teaching was next and the assessors stopped us during the teaching to add points or even see what we could do better.

The process of an assessment was such that made one not feel fear of the failure, but a peace of acceptance of the path of yoga and all that it has to teach you, my process was in the hands of the gods which leads me to sutra I.33 maitri karuna mudita upeksanam sukha dukkha punya apunya visayanam bhavanatah cittaprasadanam, through cultivation of friendliness, compassion, joy, and indifference to pleasure and pain, virtue and vice respectively, the consciousness becomes favourably disposed, serene and benevolent. Thus, how I felt, relieved it was over but glad of the process. Om shanti shanti shanti.

Ushie
Sindy Siu (JI2)

對不起！下次再挑戰！

記得當初有人問我「Sindy，有JI 3 考試，你有沒有興趣考啊？」當時我的答案是「好！去考吧！」因為我想知道自己的能力是否可以達到JI 3 程度，以及透過艾揚格瑜伽去幫助身體有特別情況的朋友，所以決定去考。

我本身是一位全職醫院員工。放工後就要教班。而我自習時間盡量安排在午餐時間和放工後；如當日晚上沒有學生上課，或醫院沒有超時工作，我便立即回家爭取時間進行自習。因為我知道自己與其他練習者不同，不能隨時隨地去瑜伽中心上課或練習，所以我盡量安排及向醫院申請有薪假期去上瑜伽工作坊，以及定期遠赴澳洲墨爾本找我的師父Peter Scott 和師母 Sue Everett 進行深度練習，以及提點有哪裡須要改進同多加練習。我盡量爭取多點時間練習及準備JI 3 的考試。其實考試之前都不斷加緊練習，但過程中，缺乏了同門的朋友一起練習及研習和提點。這一點是非常重要的。因為自己不斷練習，但好多時不知道有沒有做錯、有沒有不足夠的地方須要加強或改進。

所以今次JI 3 不合格，我並沒有因為這次失敗而不開心或痛哭。考官點出了我的腿太曲了，所以導致不合格。因為作為老師要示範動作給學生知如何做，身體哪部分要學生留意的，全都是透過老師的自習成果去教導同指引學生如何做的。如果自己都做得不好又不明白，那如何教學生。當日聽了結果及評語後，雖然心裡或多或少都有不開心，但是我没有太傷心，沒有哭。因為我知道及明白自己有不足，亦都知道自己有難言之隱，鼓勵自己已做得好好，盡了自己的努力。從哪裡跌倒，便從哪裡開始再站起向前出發，失敗乃成功之母。不氣餒再來多次！好好準備自己等待下一次JI 3 的考試！

後記：考試後曲膝的情況更嚴重，經醫生檢查是膝關節脫位。現正治療中。

Sindy
I have sat for two assessments in Hong Kong: Introductory II and Intermediate Junior I. I passed one, and not the other. This “double vision” provides an interesting insight into the process! In the most recent Assessment, I did not pass.

At an emotional level, not passing is painful. We give our all as Iyengar Yoga students and as aspiring teachers, and to fail is not easy.

But as we know, Yoga asks that we penetrate deep within. It is not about externalities.

Geetaji says: “Yoga is meant to give us a way to discover or rediscover ourselves. It teaches us how to find the great margin of maximum capacity that we have inside us so that we are able to expose ourselves to ourselves and find out what we really are. When I say that you have to adapt according to your capacity, I mean that you have to find out the potentiality, or the potential energy, that you all have inside and how to bring it to the surface in order to utilise it properly. Yoga exposes inner hidden potentialities.”

In not passing, a feeling of devastation came. A feeling of heartbreak, and of not being “enough”. And yet, over the weeks and months that have followed, a different feeling has surfaced. The question arose: have I gone further away from Yoga through the failure to pass this exam? And the answer—from deep within—came back: no. As a subject, a study, an undertaking and a vast art, science and philosophy, Yoga has not gone further away from me, or me from it. The relationship to Yoga can remain.

Part of what has touched me over this time has been the whole-heartedness of students, and the unwavering support of my teachers. Yoga is a personal process, a deep process, and a process that touches every layer of what it is to be human. No one else can walk the path for you.

In Hong Kong, I am extremely grateful to the community of students and colleagues, and especially for the guidance and support I have received from George Dovas (there aren’t words enough to thank him), Icy Lee and Karen Lam. Sometimes, when we are standing in a very dark place, the light that others shine for us illuminates a lot. A big thank you to so many people.

♥ Tiffany
UPDATES FROM MEMBERS

Please let us know what you have done recently to promote Guruji's teachings (e.g. newly-found private yoga space, sutra study group, to name a few.

New Iyengar Yoga Space:

- Lamma Island – up to 8 pax - contact Kate Lock
- Lai Chi Kok – up to 6 pax - contact Sindy Siu

Contact info at: https://iyahk.wildapricot.org/Our-Certified-Teachers

TEACHERS’ CORNER

Any teacher having spare time to teach community classes or teach in non-Iyengar studios, please contact Karen Lam at 9269 6366 so that she can set up a Teachers' WhatsApp Group for sharing teaching opportunities.

有興趣教社區班、或去非艾式瑜珈館教課的老師，請聯絡Karen Lam (電話 9269 6366)好讓她成立WhatsApp群組，方便交換資訊。